



M. Antoinette, Marie Antoinette, Queen of France

LOUIS PHILIPPE.

Queen of the French.

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LA BELLE ASSEMBLÉE,

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ILLUSTRATIVE MEMOIR OF HER MAJESTY, MARIA AMELIA, CONSORT OF LOUIS PHILIPPE I., KING OF THE FRENCH.

HER Majesty, Maria Amelia, consort of Louis Philippe I., King of the French, is the second daughter of his late Majesty, Ferdinand IV., King of the Two Sicilies,* third son of Charles III., King

of Spain, by his Queen, Amelia, a Princess of the House of Saxony; consequently she is sister to the reigning sovereign, Francis I., King of Naples and the Sicilies, King of Jerusalem, Duke of Parma, and

* Ferdinand IV. was born at Naples, on the 12th of January, 1751. He was educated under the Prince of San Nicandro, a man of probity, but of narrow mind and little information; disadvantages which his royal pupil never surmounted. From his earliest infancy, Ferdinand evinced strong attachment to the common people; in the course of his walks, he would often accost children of his own age, and, whatever might be their dress and appearance, he would talk with them familiarly, give them money, and invite them to visit him in the palace; and his great delight was to collect, on holidays, in one of the royal courts, the children of the *Lazzaroni*, to behold their sports, and to direct that good cheer should be provided for "his comrades." Numerous incidents of this character denoted his natural disposition, and rendered him the idol of the people of Naples. His father, Charles, succeeding in 1759 to the crown of Spain, Ferdinand was declared King of the Two Sicilies. The young sovereign was placed under a regency, at the head of which was the Marquis Tanucci, formerly a professor of law in the University of Pisa. The first years of Ferdinand's reign passed quietly away, although, at times, the nobles complained of what they called the de-

spotic administration of Tanucci; and the people thought that their Prince was detained too long under the regency. It was, however, the object of a party at court to impress the young King with a dislike for business; and they endeavoured, though not with all the success that they wished, to immerse him in the pursuits of pleasure and amusement. His natural goodness of heart, his love for his people, his respect for the counsels of his father, they were not yet able to corrupt or diminish.

In the spring of 1768, when little more than seventeen years of age, Ferdinand married the Princess Maria Caroline Louisa, of Austria; who soon, from superiority of mind, and her love of intrigue, acquired an ascendancy over the King which no minister was ever able to subvert. In fact, the Queen became the ruler of the state; and thus, from the peculiar circumstances of the times in which he lived, the nominal reign of Ferdinand, especially in its latter portion, presented a tissue of difficulties, losses, and misfortunes; from which he was relieved only by his death, which occurred on the 4th of January, 1825, when he was succeeded by his son, Francis I., the reigning sovereign of Naples and the Sicilies.

Prince Royal of Tuscany. Her Majesty's mother, Maria Caroline Louisa, consort of Ferdinand IV., born Princess of Lorraine and Archduchess of Austria, was the daughter of Francis of Lorraine and the Empress Queen, Maria Theresa, and sister of Joseph II., Emperor of Germany, and of the ill-fated Marie Antoinette, wife of Louis XVI., King of France.

The Princess Maria Amelia, to whom, as Queen of the French, this little sketch is devoted, was born at Caserta, a town of Naples, in the Terra di Lavoro, on the 26th of April, 1782; and is therefore at this time in her forty-ninth year. Her education was confided to Madame Ambrosio, the widow of a Neapolitan advocate, and a lady of great merit. By her, the mind and conduct of the Princess were formed upon the model of the purest virtues. It is indeed remarkable, and it reflects the highest honour upon her preceptress, as well as upon herself, that, surrounded as she was by the notoriously licentious court of Ferdinand IV. and his queen, she should have been distinguished by a deep sense of order and propriety, and have become a bright example of conjugal goodness and domestic merit—Superadded to the general principles of education and of virtue, imbibed from the tuition of Madame Ambrosio, the Princess received lessons, in the languages and sciences, with her sisters and her brother, the hereditary Prince, from the Canon Rosi, afterwards Archbishop of Nicosia.

At the close of the year 1798, she became involved in the troubles of her family, who were driven out of Italy by the French invasion, and forced to take refuge in Sicily. In the preceding year, her father, yielding to the solicitations of her brother, Charles IV., of Spain, had signed a treaty of peace with the French republic. On neither side, however, was this peace sincere; Ferdinand was driven to the necessity of preparing for war; a pretext for which was afforded him by the invasion of the Roman territory by the French. The Neapolitan army, though augmented by 60,000 men, was speedily defeated and dispersed; Ferdinand, who had taken possession of Rome, was compelled to retreat to Naples; and, in the night of the 24th of December, 1798, he embarked for Sicily with his treasures, and his minister of

war, Aicola, to whom he ascribed the discomfiture of his army. The Chevalier Acton, another of his ministers, and Lady Hamilton, the wife of the English ambassador, accompanied the Queen and her family on their voyage to Palermo. To heighten the calamity of flight—to embitter the distress of the fugitives—the weather proved so tempestuous that the Princess's little brother, a child only six years of age, was incapable of bearing up against its severity, and died on the passage. In a new residence, where nothing had been prepared for their reception, and where economy became necessary, the Princess was subjected to privations which, probably, nothing but the excellence of her education would have enabled her to sustain. At length, in January, 1800, order was restored in Naples by the return of the royal family from Sicily.

Soon afterwards, the Princess and her sisters accompanied their mother to Vienna, the Queen having been displeased, as it was said, at the diminution of her influence, and of her personal income, occasioned by unavoidable derangements in the revenue of the crown. At Vienna, the Princess suffered much affliction from the death of near relations in the Austrian and other families. The royal party, however, returned to Naples, and the court resumed its wonted splendour.

Notwithstanding its alliance with Ferdinand, the court of Vienna had, in 1801, concluded a treaty of peace with France. Naples, thus left at the mercy of Buonaparte, was compelled to renounce all her possessions on the coast of Tuscany, and to receive French garrisons in the kingdom of Naples, so long as the French should hold possession of Egypt, and even until they should evacuate Malta. During the renewed hostilities between France and Austria, in 1805, Ferdinand engaged to suffer no troops at war with France to enter his dominions. Notwithstanding this arrangement, a body of 12,000 troops, Russians and English, appeared on the coast, and the court of Naples no longer maintained its neutrality. One of the consequences of this failure was, that, when the battle of Austerlitz set the French army in Germany at liberty, Buonaparte proclaimed Ferdinand to be expelled from the throne of the Two

Sicilies, and appointed his own elder brother, Joseph, to be King in his place.

In the early part of the year 1806, Austria having again made peace with France, Ferdinand withdrew to Sicily, and took up his residence at Palermo.* Adhering to the cause of the continental powers, he uniformly resisted every proposal for a compromise with the court of the Tuileries concerning the ancient dominions of the crown.

Murat was now appointed to fill the throne of Naples, in the place of Joseph Buonaparte, who was removed to Spain. Ferdinand had been well received by his Sicilian subjects; but, in the course of a

* King Ferdinand embarked for Sicily on the 13th of February, 1806; and Joseph Buonaparte made his entrance into Naples, and alighted at the palace which the monarch had quitted. On the following day he issued a proclamation, in which Napoleon guaranteed to the Neapolitans that no branch of the house of Bourbon should again reign over them. Some of the noblesse now adhered to Joseph, and the rest of the leading men soon followed their example; so that measures were taken for proclaiming him king. After the treaty of Presburgh, he was elevated to that dignity. Entering into the views of Napoleon, Joseph soon set about introducing into the Neapolitan territory all the elements of the French government. He suppressed the religious orders, seized upon their possessions, and converted their lands to the national use; he abolished feudal rights; and he created, in imitation of the legion of honour, an Order of the Two Sicilies.—Joseph was accused of resigning to pleasure, hours which should have been devoted to business; of giving himself up to voluptuous pursuits, rather than endeavouring to secure the regard of the people; yet it does not appear that he was either tyrannical or cruel. Towards the end of the first year of his government, he visited the Calabrian states, where, at oppressive expense, he gave several *fêtes*; but, as the treasury had been nearly exhausted, the Neapolitans, while they partook of the honour, grumbled at the imposts which were levied to defray the cost. This, indeed, was the great charge against Joseph Buonaparte, while he presided over the affairs of the kingdom of Naples; so that, when it was found expedient by Napoleon to remove him to another scene of action, his departure called forth no lamentations. This change occurred in 1808, when he was proclaimed King of Spain and the Indies, by a decree of Napoleon Buonaparte, as Emperor of France.

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few months, his tranquillity began to be disturbed, through differences which had sprung up between the Queen and the English, who occupied the chief points of the island, and whose cause she had hitherto supported.

Fortunately for the Princess, the time was rapidly approaching when her mental sufferings, the result of these harassing circumstances, were to experience an alleviation, though not an immediate removal. It was in the month of June, 1808, that the Duc d'Orleans arrived at Palermo. There he saw, and loved the Princess; the Queen regarded his merits as of a character well adapted to consort with those of her daughter; the King also approved the marriage; and, at the expiration of about a year and-a-half, during which period the Duke had been much engaged in England and elsewhere, respecting his family concerns, the parties were married, as has been stated, on the 25th of November, 1809. Three months previously, the Duke had taken his sister, Mademoiselle d'Orleans, to Palermo; and, ever since, the most intimate union has subsisted between her and her now royal sister-in-law.

From this period, the fortunes of the Princess were necessarily identified with those of her husband. She became the mother of a fine and amiable family; she was the kind and affectionate participator in the joys and sorrows of the Duke—in his hopes, his fears, his expectations; with him she shared and blessed his peaceful happy home, after the restoration of the Bourbons; and with him she now shares, and, by her many virtues, sheds a mild lustre upon the throne of France.

Her Majesty's face, though not strictly handsome, beams with kind and benevolent expression. Her figure is elegant, her carriage matronly. Her time is devoted to her family—to her domestic duties. In the education of her eight surviving children (one, born at Twickenham, she lost in infancy) she has ever taken a lively and active interest; and, in every sense—for they are good as well as handsome—they nobly reward her for her care. Her eldest son, Ferdinand Louis Philippe, Duc de Chartres, now Prince Royal of France, was born on the 8th of September, 1810. He was educated, with

the sons of the citizens, at the public schools and colleges of France ; his intellectual powers—his accomplishments, his scholastic and mental attainments—are reported to be of the first order. To assist in perfecting his education—to acquire a knowledge of the character, habits, and manners of the people—he not long since travelled over great part of England, Scotland, and Ireland.—Her Majesty's next son, Louis Charles, Duc de Nemours, born on the 25th of October, 1814, is remarkably handsome ; his figure is elegant and pleasing, his mind highly cultivated. Francis Ferdinand Philippe, Duc de Joinville, born on the 14th of August, 1818 ; Henry, Duc d'Aumale, born on the 16th of June, 1822 ; and Anthony, Duc de Montpensier, born on the 31st of July, 1824, are all handsome, well-formed, and of amiable manners. The Princesses are—Louisa Maria Theresa Charlotte Isabella, Mademoiselle d'Orleans, born on the 3d of April, 1812 ; Maria Christiana Caroline, Mademoiselle de Valois, born on the 12th of April, 1813 ; and Maria Clotilda, Mademoiselle de Beaujolais, born on the 3d of June, 1817. In person, they are agreeable ; in habits, simple ; in manners, elegant. With the Queen, their mother, the whole family were present at the taking of the oath by Philippe I., King of the French, on the 9th of August, 1830 ; and it has been observed by an eye-witness of the grand and imposing scene, that “ no spectacle could be more touching than that of beholding the anxious tenderness and love with which the family regarded their illustrious father, when, for the first time, he ascended the throne.” To such a father—such a mother—such an offspring, it is impossible—independently of all political considerations—not to wish prosperity and happiness.

Her Majesty, the Queen of the French,

has two surviving brothers and a sister :—Francis I., King of Naples and the Sicilies, born on the 19th of August, 1777 ;—Leopold, Prince of Salerno, born on the 2d of July, 1790 ; married, in 1816, the Archduchess Maria Clementina, daughter of Francis, the reigning Emperor of Austria, by his second Empress, Maria Theresa, daughter of Ferdinand IV., King of Naples ;—and Maria Christiana, born on the 17th of January, 1779 ; married, in 1807, to Charles Felix Joseph, reigning King of Sardinia, Duke of Savoy, Piedmont, and Genoa.

The present King of Naples has been twice married. His first wife was the Archduchess Maria Clementina, daughter of the Emperor, Leopold II., and sister of Francis, present Emperor of Austria. She died in 1801, leaving a daughter, Caroline, born in 1798, and married, in 1816, to Charles Ferdinand, Duc de Berri, who fell by the hand of an assassin on the 14th of February, 1820.

The second and present wife of the King of Naples, to whom he was united in 1802, is Maria Isabella, born in 1789, daughter of Charles IV., late King of Spain, and sister of Ferdinand VII., his successor. By her Majesty he has twelve children, as follows :

1. Ferdinand Charles, Duke of Calabria, Commander-in-Chief of the Land Forces, born in 1810 ;—
2. Charles Ferdinand, Prince de Capone, born in 1811 ;—
3. Leopold Benjamin, Count of Syracuse, born in 1813 ;—
4. Anthony, Count de Lecca, born in 1816 ;—
5. Louis Charles, Count de Aguila, born in 1824 ;—
6. Francis, Count de Trapani, born in 1827 ;—
7. Louisa, born in 1804 ; married, in 1815, to the Infant Don Francis, of Spain ;—
8. Maria Christiana, born in 1806, married to Ferdinand VII., King of Spain ;—
9. Maria Antoinette, born in 1814 ;—
10. Maria Amelia, born in 1818 ;—
11. Caroline, born in 1820 ;—
12. Theresa, born in 1822.